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CRIMSON PLAGUE
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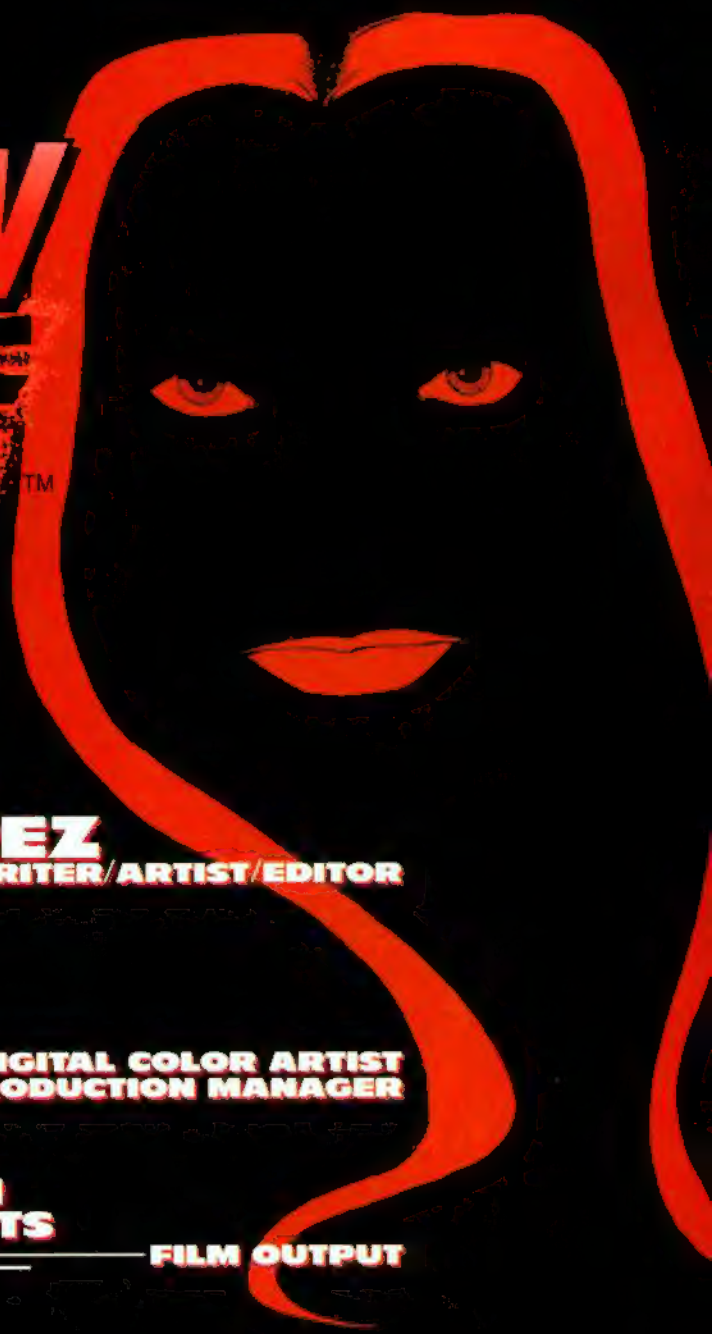
by GEORGE PEREZ
with TOM SMITH
PREMIERE ISSUE



CRIMSON PLAGUE™

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO MY WIFE, CAROL, WHO'S PATIENCE AND SUPPORT HELPED MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

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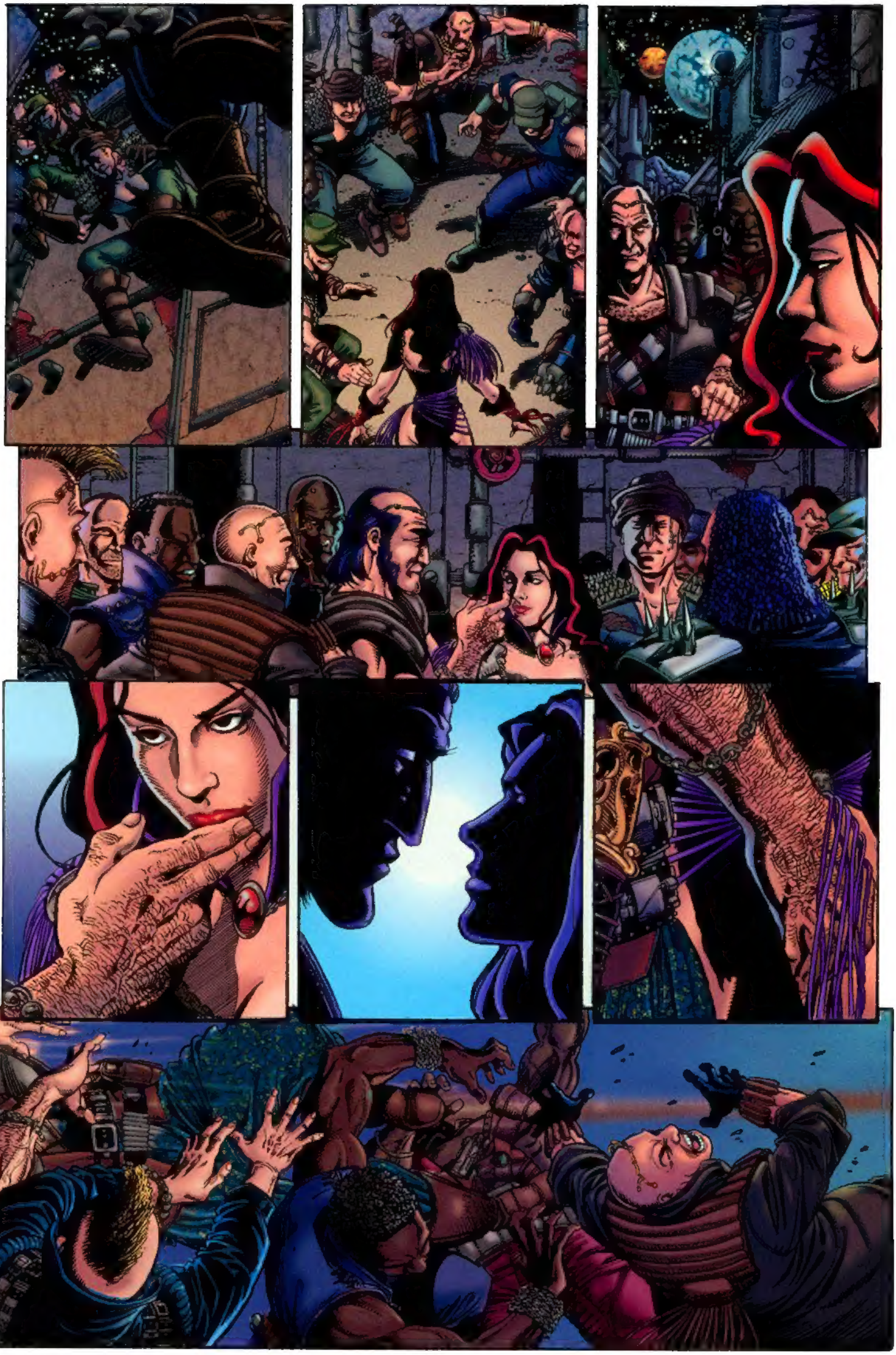
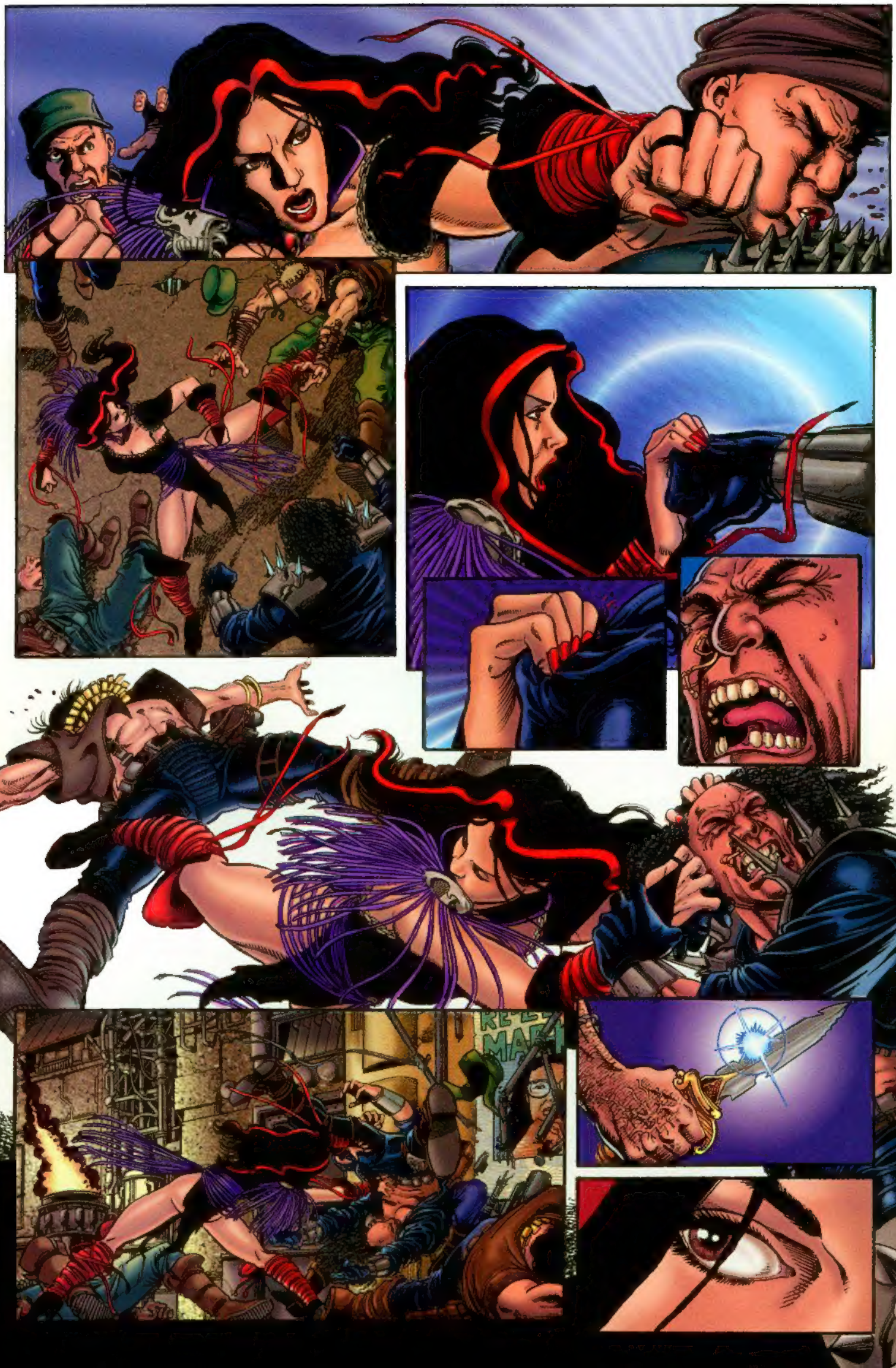




IT WORKS!

I BLEED-- YOU DIE.
END OF STORY.

CRIMSON PLAGUE™ BOOK ONE

DEAD MOON PARTY

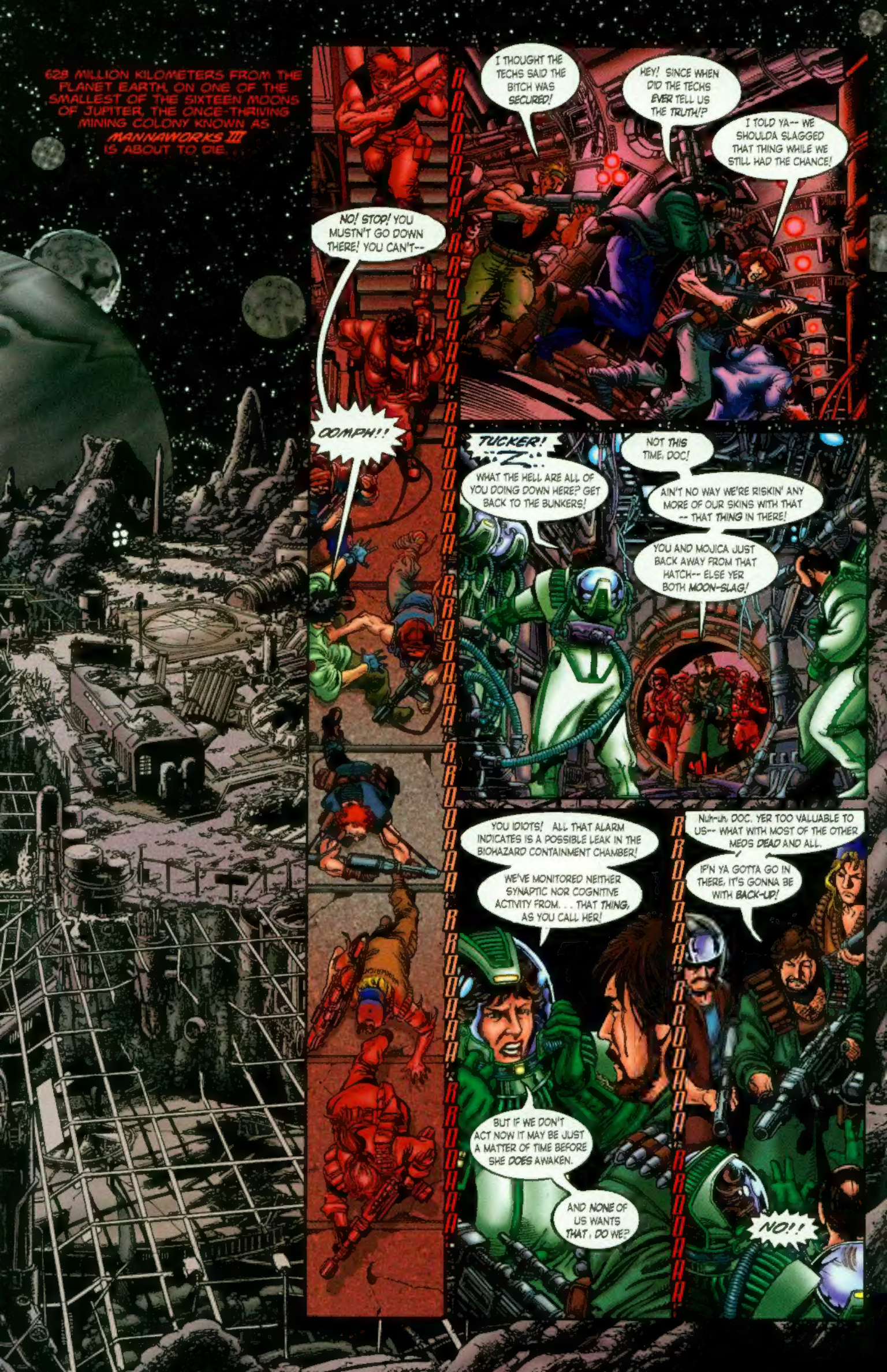
HER NAME IS *DINA:*

AND, CONTRARY TO WHAT SHE SAID, THIS IS **NOT** THE END OF THE STORY.

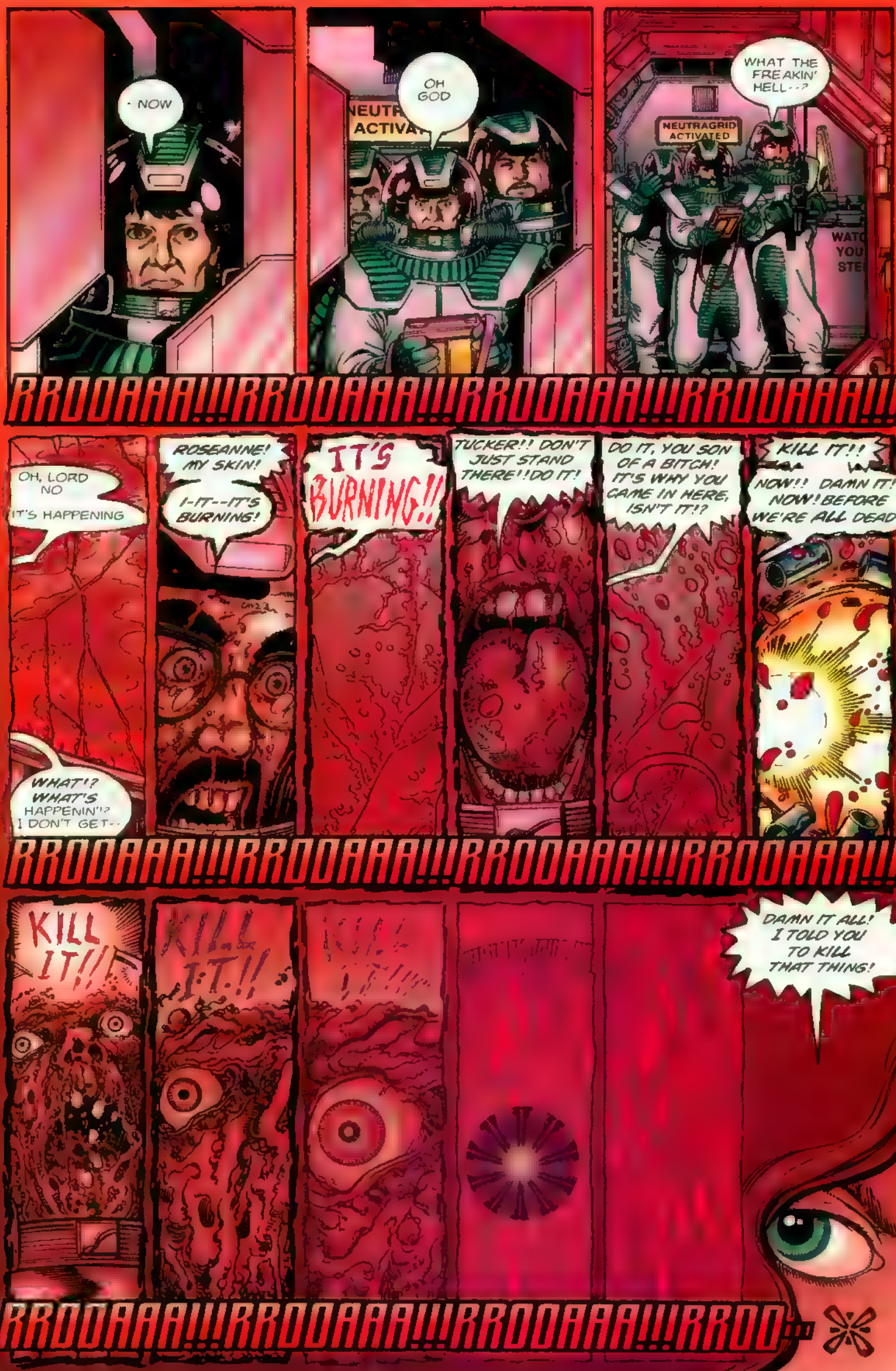
THIS WAS BUT ONE RANDOM CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF *CRIMSON PLAGUE.*

WHAT FOLLOWS IS ANOTHER. THE SETTING IS APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR AGO ON A FARAWAY MOON--

--WHERE, FIVE YEARS AGO, DINA: SIMMONS WAS BORN.


628 MILLION KILOMETERS FROM THE PLANET EARTH, ON ONE OF THE SMALLEST OF THE SIXTEEN MOONS OF JUPITER, THE ONCE-THRIVING MINING COLONY KNOWN AS MANNAWORKS III IS ABOUT TO DIE. . .
NO! STOP! YOU MUSTN'T GO DOWN THERE! YOU CAN'T--
OOMPH!!
RROOAAA RROOAAA RROOAAA RROOAAA RROOAAA RROOAAA RROOAAA
I THOUGHT THE TECHS SAID THE BITCH WAS SECURED!
HEY! SINCE WHEN DID THE TECHS EVER TELL US THE TRUTH!?
I TOLD YA-- WE SHOULDA SLAGGED THAT THING WHILE WE STILL HAD THE CHANCE!
TUCKER!
WHAT THE HELL ARE ALL OF YOU DOING DOWN HERE? GET BACK TO THE BUNKERS!
NOT THIS TIME, DOC!
AIN'T NO WAY WE'RE RISKIN' ANY MORE OF OUR SKINS WITH THAT -- THAT THING IN THERE!
YOU AND MOJICA JUST BACK AWAY FROM THAT HATCH-- ELSE YER BOTH MOON-SLAG!
YOU IDIOTS! ALL THAT ALARM INDICATES IS A POSSIBLE LEAK IN THE BIOHAZARD CONTAINMENT CHAMBER!
WE'VE MONITORED NEITHER SYNAPTIC NOR COGNITIVE ACTIVITY FROM. . . THAT THING, AS YOU CALL HER!
BUT IF WE DON'T ACT NOW IT MAY BE JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SHE DOES AWAKEN.
AND NONE OF US WANTS THAT, DO WE?
Nuh-uh, DOC. YER TOO VALUABLE TO US-- WHAT WITH MOST OF THE OTHER MEDS DEAD AND ALL.
IF'N YA GOTTA GO IN THERE, IT'S GONNA BE WITH BACK-UP!
RROOAAA RROOAAA RROOAAA
NO!!

ALL RIGHT, TUCKER-- ON ONE CONDITION: THAT YOU BE THE ONE WHO COMES IN WITH US-- YOU, AND YOU ALONE!
WHAT!?
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS! Dr LATORRE, THAT MURDERER WILL KILL HER THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY HE GETS-- AND US AS WELL!
IF THAT'S HOW IT PLAYS, Dr MOJICA
RIGHT NOW I DON'T SEE THAT WE HAVE MUCH CHOICE IN THE MATTER NOT MUCH CHOICE AND NOT MUCH TIME
THEM'S THE TERMS, WOLF YOUR BALLS AS BIG AS YOUR GUN?
RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOHHH
Ooooh-- YA GOT QUITE A SET YERSELF, DOC
JUST PASS ME OVER ONE O' THEM BUBBLE SUITS AND YA GOT YERSELF ONE BONA FIDE ARMED ESCORT.
CONTAINMENT CHAMBER EXTERIOR BOLTLOCK DISENGAGED
RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR
THIS IS CRAZY, WOLF-- YOU KNOW THAT
HEY, ROBBIE-- WHAT THE HELL-- I WAS A DEAD MAN LONG BEFORE I EVER SET FOOT ON THIS ROCK
SO MUCH FOR AMNESTY, HUH?
ROSEANNE, WHAT THE BLAZES DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING!? WHAT IF THAT CREATURE WAKES UP WHILE WE'RE IN THERE?
YOU KNOW HOW SHE'LL REACT WHEN SEES TUCKER AND THAT WEAPON
STOP CALLING HER A "CREATURE", GEORGE. I EXPECT THAT FROM THOSE SLAGGARDS, NOT FROM A FELLOW SCIENTIST
ANYWAY, IF SHE DOES AWAKEN, I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT MINE IS THE FIRST FACE SHE SEES.
LET'S JUST PRAY THAT SHE STILL TRUSTS ME.
AWRIGHT, TECHS-- SUIT'S ON! TIME TO GET THIS PARTY JUICIN'!
RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR-RROOAAR
OUTER HATCH SEALED AND SECURED
GODDAM! THE ALARM'S TEN-TIMES LOUDER IN HERE! CAN'T YA SHUT THE FREAKIN' THING OFF, AWREADY!?
THE ALARM IS WIRED TO SHUT OFF ONCE WE CONFIRM AND SEAL THE LEAK THAT IS WHAT WHAT WE'RE ALL HERE FOR, RIGHT?
WATCH YOUR STEP
YEAH, YEAH, WHATEVER. LET'S JUST GET THIS FREAKIN' BUSINESS OVER WITH, OKAY?
ALL RIGHT THEN INTERIOR ACCESS HATCH OPENING
RROOAAA!!!RROOAAA!!!RROOAAA!!!RROOAAA!!!


NOW
OH GOD
NEUTRAGRID ACTIVATED
WHAT THE FREAKIN' HELL--?
RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!
OH, LORD NO
IT'S HAPPENING
ROSEANNE! MY SKIN!
I-IT--IT'S BURNING!
WHAT!? WHAT'S HAPPENIN'!? I DON'T GET--
IT'S BURNING!!
TUCKER!! DON'T JUST STAND THERE!! DO IT!
DO IT, YOU SON OF A BITCH! IT'S WHY YOU CAME IN HERE, ISN'T IT!?
KILL IT!! NOW!! DAMN IT! NOW! BEFORE WE'RE ALL DEAD!
RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!
KILL IT!!
KILL IT!!
DAMN IT ALL! I TOLD YOU TO KILL THAT THING!
RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!RRODAAA!!!RROD...

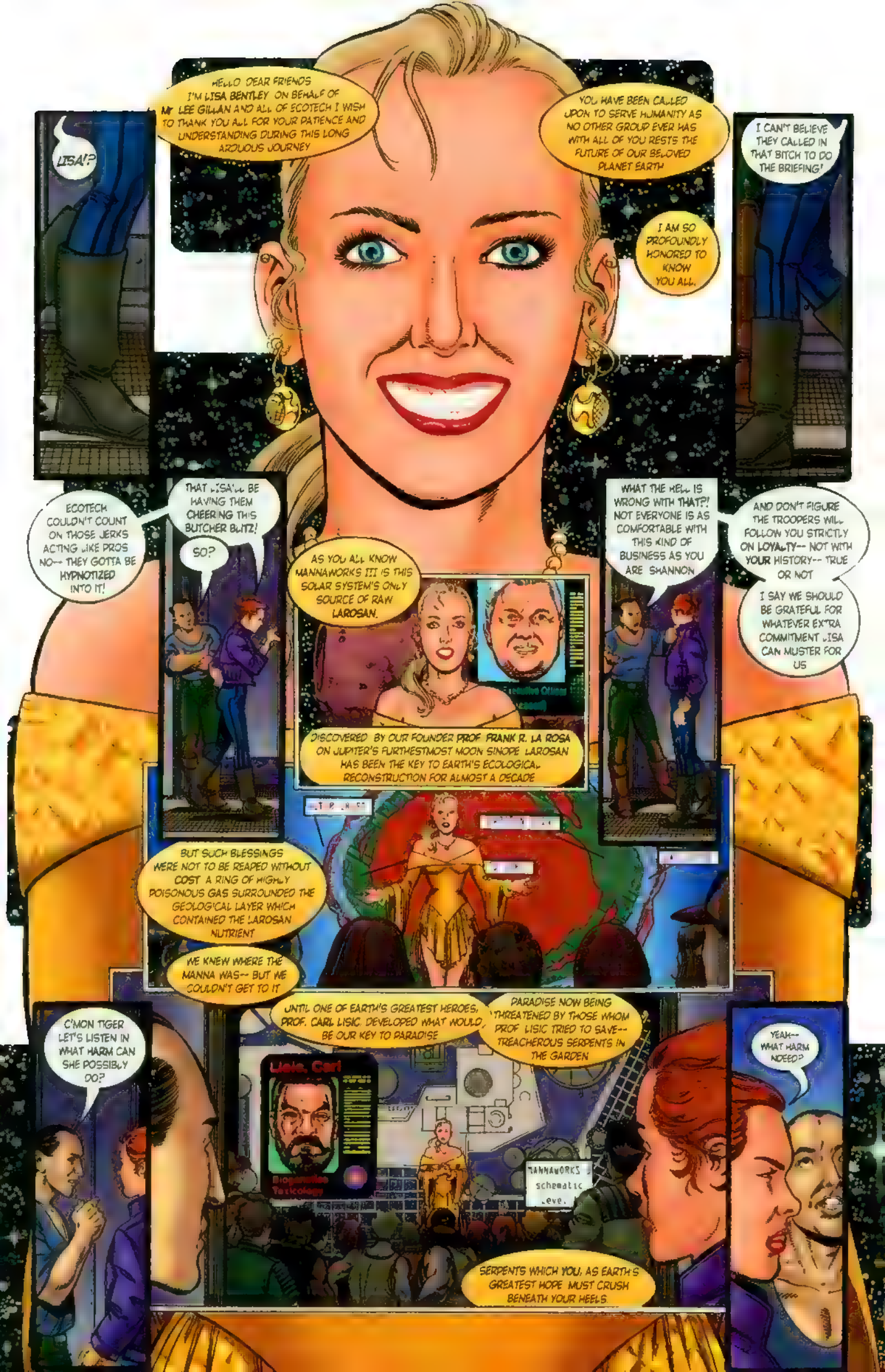
ANDRE! WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON!? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD DRUM NOT TO RUN A DRILL WHILE I'M IN MEDITATION!?
SORRY, TIGER, BUT I'M AFRAID THIS AIN'T NO DRILL!
THE ALARM'S COMING FROM CARGO BAY 5!
WHAT!? THE BA! HU!? BUT, HOW--?
MY GUESS WOULD BE A FUEL LEAK OF SOME SORT.
GET SOME PANTS ON AND I'LL MEET YOU THERE!
PANTS, HELL!
A BLASTER!? FOR A FUEL LEAK?
FUEL LEAK, MY ASS! I RAN A COMPLETE SYSTEMS SCAN JUST HOURS AGO!
SOMEONE'S TAMPERING WITH MY SHIP!
OH, COME ON! THEN WE WOULDA HEARD HER ALARM INSTEAD!
NOT IF THEY OVERRODE THE SECURITY SYSTEMS FIRST!
CARGO BAY 5
SHANNON, YOU AND ME GO BACK A LOT OF YEARS--
BUT, YOUR ESCALATING PARANOIA IS REALLY STARTING TO SPOOK ME!
DON'T KNOCK PARANOIA, ANDRE.
IT'S KEPT ME ALIVE FOR NINETEEN YEARS!
THAT'S TWENTY TIGER
Sssssh-- THERE'S A LIGHT COMING FROM IN THERE
SHANNON, YOU DON'T--
FREEZE!!
hun? what the hell!?

Happy Birthday Shannon!
SURPR--
WHOA!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU. . .
HAPPY BI-IRTHDAY, DEAR SHA-A-NNON, HAP--
THAT'S ENOUGH PAULY
HUH? WHAT? Umm-- WHY IS SHANNON POINTING THAT GUN AT US?
TOLD YOU BIG RED WOULDN'T LIKE SURPR SE PARTIES
SORRY 'BOUT THE SUBTERFUGE TIGER BUT I FIGURED A SPECIAL OCCASION WARRANTED SOME SPECIAL COORDINATION
YOU SET THIS UP? YOU?
HEY, NO NEED TO THANK ME, TIGER
AFTER ALL, YOU ONLY SAY GOOD-BYE TO YOUR TEENS ONCE, Y'KNOW
YOU STUPID-- IRRESPONSIBLE-- JERK
GET OUT! ALL OF YOU!
GET AWAY FROM MY SHIP!
NOW!!
SHANNON! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DO-NG!?

NOW HOLD ON THERE, SHANNON DO YOU REAL ZE HOW MUCH A CAKE LIKE THAT COSTS THESE DAYS? HOW MUCH MY CREW--
I'LL HANDLE THIS, CAPT DRUM.
DON'T WORRY CMDR LOWER I PERSONALLY CLEARED ALL THIS WITH Mr GILLAN AT ECOTECH
>sigh<
RIGHT
BUT NOT WITH ME, PROCOPIO. THIS IS STILL MY MISSION, RIGHT?
AND THAT'S STILL MY SHIP BACK THERE, RIGHT?
RIGHT
AND WHAT WAS IT WE AGREED TO REGARDING MY SHIP?
DON'T BOTHER, MR PROCOPIO. WE CAN RECITE THAT MANTRA IN OUR SLEEP.
"NO ONE'S ALLOWED NEAR THE BAI HU EXCEPT FOR LOWER AND PRADEL."
LET'S GO, TROOPS AT LEAST THEY CAN'T SAY WE DIDN'T TRY
B-BUT, WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH SHANNON'S CAKE?
DON'T TEMPT ME TO TELL YOU, VAN CAMPEN
Happy
damn!

SCOTCH SPACE FREIGHTER
SAGITTARIUS
TASTED PURTY GOOD, TOO IF I REMEMBER RIGHT I DON'T THINK SHELLEY AND WINSLOW EVER TASTED A REAL CAKE BEFORE SURE HOPE THEY AIN'T DISAPPOINTED
Except maybe Paul Van Carpen.

CARGO BAY 5
SECURED AREA!
I TELL YA, DARLIN', I'M BEGINNIN' TO BELIEVE ALL THOSE STORIES I READ ABOUT SHANNON LOWER. PROCOPIO SEEMS POSITIVELY AFRAID OF HER. AND HE'S AN ECOTECH OFFICER!
AND WHATEVER IT IS THE TROOPERS HAVE AGAINST HER, ALL I CAN FIGURE IS THAT IT HAD SOMETHIN' TO DO WITH SHANNON'S DAD BEIN' KILLED AND HER EXECUTIN' THE KILLER.
BUT, THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. AFTER ALL, SHANNON'S DAD WAS A STAR TROOPER AS WELL. YOU'D THINK THEY'D BE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT SHANNON DID.
I DUNNO-- ALL THIS IS MAKIN' ME A BIT ANTSY ABOUT CHRISTIAN AND OLIVIA ENLISTING IN THE CORPS AND KNOWING ENOLA. I BET SHE--
SHELTON! THIS IS CHANDLER!
Wha--? TIM?
YEAH, BOSS. YOU TOLD ME TO FLAG YOU WHEN WE REACHED THE SAFETY PERIMETER OF MANNAWORKS III.
WELL, HERE WE BE 100 KILOMETERS OUTSIDE DETECTOR RANGE. I'M PUTTING A MAG-SCAN ON VISUAL
SEE IT? SINOPE-- ECOTECH'S LITTLE ROCK GARDEN IN THE SKY
THANKS, TIM. FULL STOP. I'LL NOTIFY PROCOPIO
MR. PROCOPIO, HELM SAYS WE'VE REACHED THE COORDINATES OUTSIDE MANNAWORKS III. I'VE INSTITUTED PARALLEL ORBIT.
NOW, IS ECOTECH FINALLY GONNA LET ME AND MY CREW IN ON WHAT EXACTLY WE'VE COME HERE FOR? I HAVE A NOTION THIS ISN'T GONNA BE YOUR STANDARD LABOR NEGOTIATION, IS IT?
RIGHT YOU ARE, CAPT. DRUM. BE SO KIND AS TO TELL YOUR CREW TO MEET THE GOOD DOCTORS AND MYSELF IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM. I'LL INFORM MAJOR CARTER AND HER SQUAD TO DO THE SAME
SOON, EVERYTHING REGARDING OUR NOBLE MISSION WILL BE REVEALED
YEAH? BY WHOM?
NOT Cmdr. LOWER, I HOPE
WHAT DID I TELL YOU? MS. LOWER'S HARDLY THE TYPE WHO'LL ENGENDER AMITY, LET ALONE TRUST
I AGREE WITH Dr. DONG SURE, THE TROOPERS WILL FOLLOW ORDERS. BUT, WE NEED MORE. THEY HAVE TO BE STIRRED.
NOT TO WORRY, Dr. MAYFIELD. THEY SHALL BE
LISA WILL SEE TO THAT


HELLO DEAR FRIENDS I'M LISA BENTLEY ON BEHALF OF MR LEE GILLAN AND ALL OF ECOTECH I WISH TO THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING DURING THIS LONG ARDUOUS JOURNEY
YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED UPON TO SERVE HUMANITY AS NO OTHER GROUP EVER HAS WITH ALL OF YOU RESTS THE FUTURE OF OUR BELOVED PLANET EARTH
I AM SO PROFOUNDLY HONORED TO KNOW YOU ALL.
LISA!?
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY CALLED IN THAT BITCH TO DO THE BRIEFING!
ECOTECH COULDN'T COUNT ON THOSE JERKS ACTING LIKE PROS NO-- THEY GOTTA BE HYPNOTIZED INTO IT!
THAT LISA'LL BE HAVING THEM CHEERING THIS BUTCHER BLITZ!
SO?
AS YOU ALL KNOW MANNAWORKS III IS THIS SOLAR SYSTEM'S ONLY SOURCE OF RAW LAROSAN.
DISCOVERED BY OUR FOUNDER PROF FRANK R. LA ROSA ON JUPITER'S FURTHESTMOST MOON SINOPE LAROSAN HAS BEEN THE KEY TO EARTH'S ECOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION FOR ALMOST A DECADE
WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH THAT?! NOT EVERYONE IS AS COMFORTABLE WITH THIS KIND OF BUSINESS AS YOU ARE SHANNON
AND DON'T FIGURE THE TROOPERS WILL FOLLOW YOU STRICTLY ON LOYALTY-- NOT WITH YOUR HISTORY-- TRUE OR NOT
I SAY WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR WHATEVER EXTRA COMMITMENT LISA CAN MUSTER FOR US
BUT SUCH BLESSINGS WERE NOT TO BE REAPED WITHOUT COST A RING OF HIGHLY POISONOUS GAS SURROUNDED THE GEOLOGICAL LAYER WHICH CONTAINED THE LAROSAN NUTRIENT
WE KNEW WHERE THE MANNA WAS-- BUT WE COULDN'T GET TO IT
UNTIL ONE OF EARTH'S GREATEST HEROES, PROF. CARL LISIC. DEVELOPED WHAT WOULD BE OUR KEY TO PARADISE
PARADISE NOW BEING THREATENED BY THOSE WHOM PROF LISIC TRIED TO SAVE-- TREACHEROUS SERPENTS IN THE GARDEN
Lisic, Carl
Biogenetics Toxicology
MANNAWORKS III schematic Level
C'MON TIGER LET'S LISTEN IN WHAT HARM CAN SHE POSSIBLY DO?
YEAH-- WHAT HARM INDEED?
SERPENTS WHICH YOU, AS EARTH'S GREATEST HOPE MUST CRUSH BENEATH YOUR HEELS.

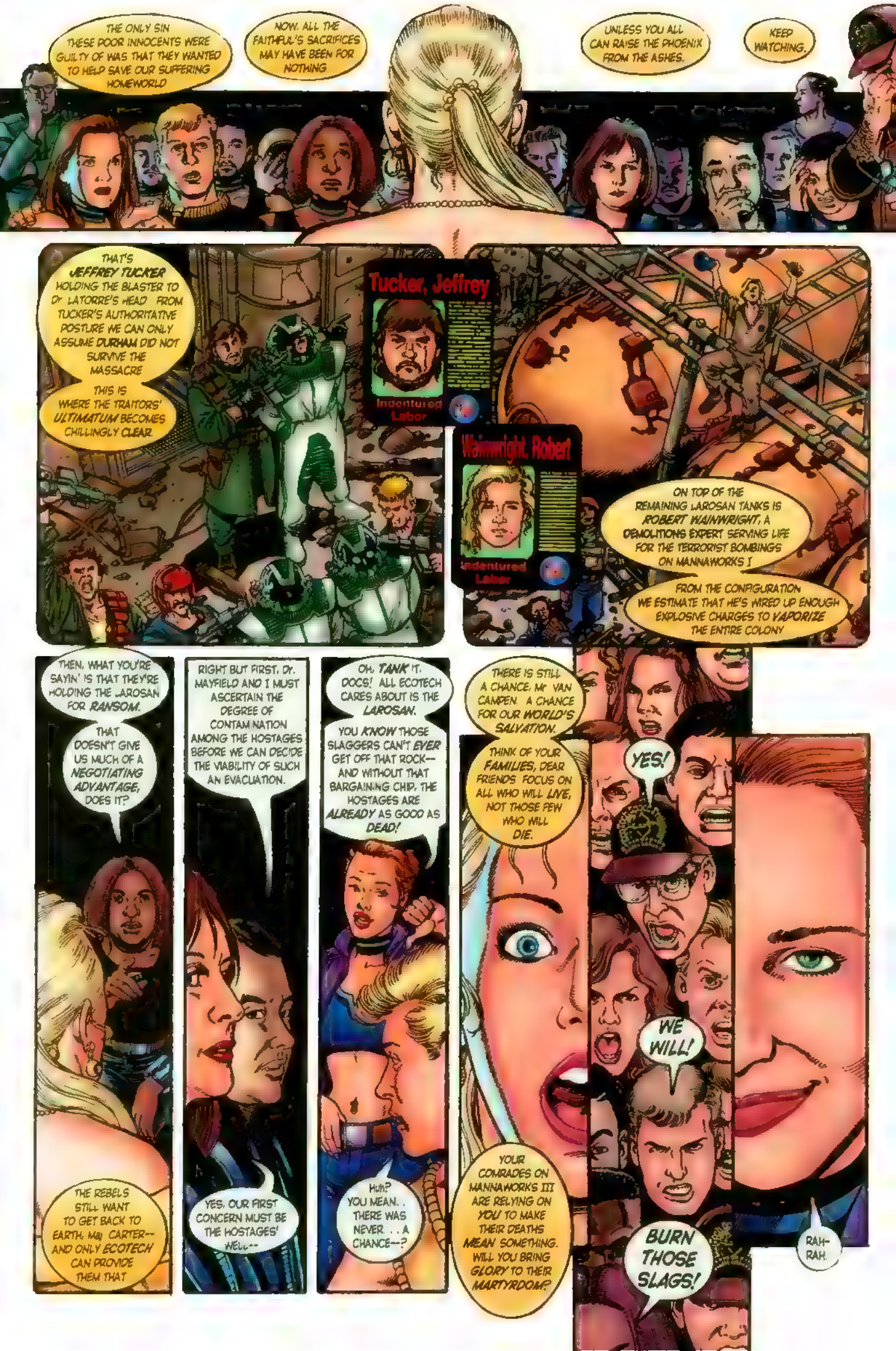
PROF. LISIC FORMULATED A SPECIAL ANTI-TOXIN WHICH IMMUNIZED HUMANS TO THE SINODEAN GAS. THUS ALLOWING LAROSAN TO BE MINED SAFELY AT LAST
ECOTECH, EVER MINDFUL OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARRANGED THAT THE ANTITOXIN BE ADMINISTERED TO CONDEMNED CRIMINALS AS PART OF A TEN-YEAR AMNESTY
THEY WORK THE MINES FOR A DECADE AND THEIR SENTENCES WOULD BE COMMUTED
IT WAS AN ACT OF CHARITY THROWN BACK IN OUR FACES ON THE FATEFUL DAY THE E.S.F. GEMINI WAS TO RECEIVE ITS PAYLOAD OF LIFE-GIVING LAROSAN.
WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SEE NOW IS THE FINAL LOG OF CAPT. BRUCE MONSANTY OF THE GEMINI.
BOXCAR ALPHA. No. 3 BAY READY FOR FIRST SHIPMENT.
AYE-AYE BOSS! BOXCAR ALPHA COMING IN HEAVY.
THE GEMINI? DIDN'T THAT CRASH SOMEWHERE IN AFRICA?
YES, CAPT. DRUM. THESE RECORDINGS WERE PIECED TOGETHER FROM THE WRECKAGE.
JESUS! WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?
BRUCE MY TAIL'S BEEN HIT BY SOME BLAST FROM THE MOON SURFACE!
SOMEHOW, THE CONVICTS ESCAPED FROM THEIR BUNKERS AND STARTED SLAUGHTERING EVERYONE IN SIGHT
WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT AMONG THE FIRST CASUALTIES WAS PROF. LISIC HIMSELF
THE RIOTERS WERE LED BY MINE FOREMAN KEITH DURHAM. ECOTECH AWARDED HIM THAT POSITION BASED ON TRUST AND RESPECT. THIS IS HOW HE THANKED US FOR IT.
IT WAS OBVIOUS WHAT THE RIOTERS WERE TRYING TO DO
Durham, Keith
Indentured Labor
STOP THE LAROSAN FROM EVER LEAVING THE MANNA WORKS COMPLEX--
--AND KILL ANYONE WHO GOT IN THEIR WAY!

THE MANNAWORKS SECURITY FORCES PERFORMED VALIANTLY WITH SECURITY CHIEF TOBIAS H. McTERSHUM LEADING THE WAY IT APPEARED THAT THE FORCES OF GOOD MIGHT ACTUALLY EMERGE VICTORIOUS
McTershum, Tobias H.
Surface Security
WAIT A SECOND! I RECOGNIZE THAT GUY!
DIDN'T HE USED TO BE A TAGGER?
GOOD MEMORY, Lt BUNN YES-- Mr McTERSHUM WAS INDEED ONCE A MEMBER OF THAT RENEGADE FACTION
HIS ALIAS THEN WAS ORDER.
WANTED
The TAGGER known as ORDER
AND ORDER IS WHAT HE WAS HIRED TO MAINTAIN AND FOR SEVEN YEARS HE DID SO MAGNIFICENTLY
UNBELIEVABLE A TAGGER-- WORKING FOR ECOTECH. WHO'D A-THUNK IT?
LISA, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHERS?

THANKFULLY, Mr. CHANDLER, MOST OF THE TAGGERS CAME TO REALIZE THE FOLLY OF THEIR DESTRUCTIVE ENTERPRISE AFTER ABANDONING THEIR COVER IDENTITIES THE TAGGERS PRETTY MUCH DISBANDED
ECOTECH HAD BECOME UNQUESTIONABLY MANKIND'S ONLY TRUE HOPE FOR ITS SUSTENANCE SECURITY PROSPERITY AND COMFORT
THUS, THE WORLD WAS CONTENT --AND OUTGREW ITS NEED FOR GLADIATORS.

MR MCTERSHUM WAS NOT THE ONLY TAGGER WHO FINALLY ACKNOWLEDGED AND EMBRACED THE GOOD THAT IS ECOTECH
KEVIN MADDOX FORMERLY KNOWN AS MAD DX, ALSO JOINED THE MANNAWORKS III PROJECT AS A SECURITY CHIEF
Maddox, Kevin
SADLY, MR MADDOX WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO FALL SERVING THE COMMON GOOD
AND AS THESE IMAGES SHOW TOBIAS & MCTERSHUM SOON JOINED HIM
WITH THE OUTSIDE DEFENSES BROKEN, THE RIOTERS FINALLY MADE THEIR WAY INTO THE PROCESSING CENTER FILLING THE OUTER CHAMBERS WITH DEADLY SINOPEAN GAS
THOSE POOR INNOCENT TECHNICIANS DIED HORRIBLY
GEORGE! THEY'VE BROKEN THROUGH THE CONTAINMENT WALLS! THE TOXICITY LEVELS ARE SHOOTING OFF THE SCREENS!
SPAN A NEUTRAGRID ALONG THE BREACH! EVEN IF THOSE SLAGGARDS MAKE IT ALL THE WAY IN WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO MINIMIZE FURTHER CONTAMINATION!
DR. ROSEANNE LATORRE-- I'VE READ ALL HER TREATISES ON HORMONX ENGINEERING AND GENETIC EMBRYONICS I STILL DON'T GET WHAT SHE'S DOING WORKING ON A MINING STATION
STUMPS ME ANNE
HOLD ON ISN'T THAT ? YES, IT IS!
IT'S SHAY PATEL!
RRDDRAA-RRDDRAA-RRDDRAA-RRRRRAA!
YES DR DONG DR SHAY PATEL WAS PROF LISIC'S CHIEF AIDE AND ASSISTED HIM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SINOPE ANTITOXIN
Patel, Shay
Biogenetics Toxicology
A GREAT MAN A GREAT SCIENTIST.
Clarke, Joseph
Sublevel Security
FINALLY REDUCED TO RUNNING FOR HIS LIFE AS SECURITY GUARD JOSEPH CLARKE TRIED BRAVELY TO PROTECT HIM FROM THE BLOODTHIRSTY MOB PURSUING THEM.

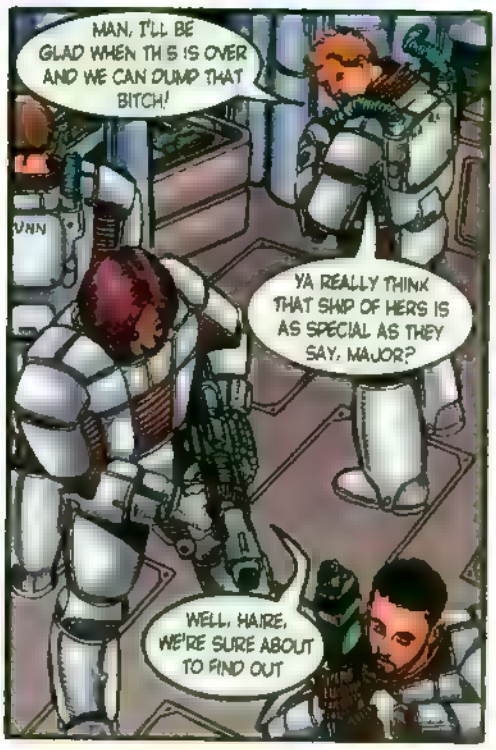
HEY WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW? WHERE'S PATEL? SECURITY GUARD?
THERE CAPT. DRUM
THEY HAD RUN BEYOND THE NEUTRAGRID -- AND POOR JOE CLARKE WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO SUCCUMB TO THE SYNOPEAN GAS
GOOD LORD-- I NEVER IMAGINED THE GAS COULD DO THAT!
THE GAS MUST HAVE MUTATED IN THE YEARS SINCE IT WAS LAST TESTED ON NON-IMMUNIZED SUBJECTS
LOOK AT PATEL'S FACE POOR BASTARD HE KNOWS HE'S GOING TO DIE
AND THERE'S NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO TO SAVE HIM
MONSANTY TO ALL BOXCARS! GET OUT OF THERE! NOW!! RETURN TO HANGARS! C'MON, YOU GUYS! HURRY!
BRUCE WE CAN'T CAUGHT IN
WE LOST ALL AUDIO FROM THAT POINT. WHAT FOLLOW ARE THE LAST IMAGES EVER RECORDED OF MANHAMOKAS !!!
AS I SAID, THERE'S NO SOUND-- BUT THE IMAGES WILL SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES
I BEG YOU MY DEAR FRIENDS-- TRY TO BE STRONG
OH YEAH-- THIS OUGHT TO BE GOOD
TIGER SOMETIMES I THINK YOU'RE JUST SICK

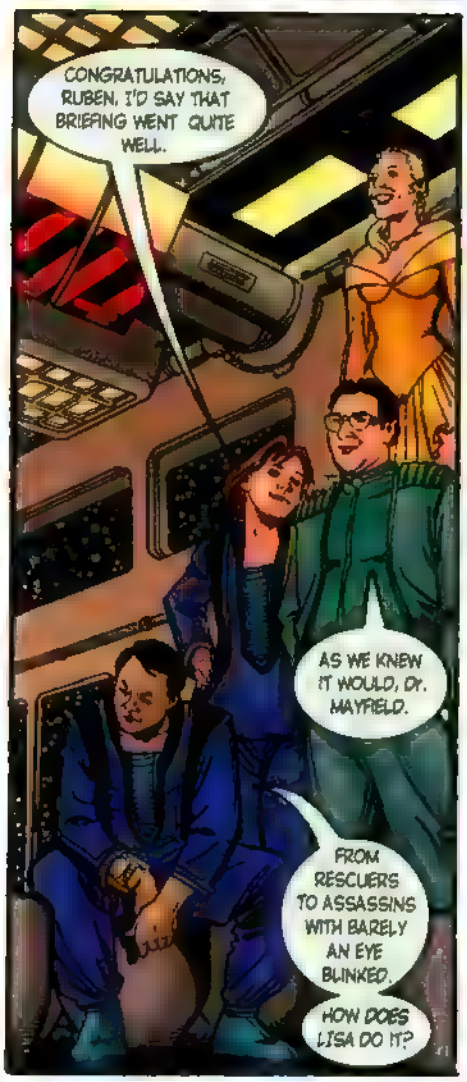

THE ONLY SIN THESE POOR INNOCENTS WERE GUILTY OF WAS THAT THEY WANTED TO HELP SAVE OUR SUFFERING HOMEWORLD
NOW, ALL THE FAITHFUL'S SACRIFICES MAY HAVE BEEN FOR NOTHING
UNLESS YOU ALL CAN RAISE THE PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES.
KEEP WATCHING.
THAT'S JEFFREY TUCKER HOLDING THE BLASTER TO Dr LATORRE'S HEAD FROM TUCKER'S AUTHORITATIVE POSTURE WE CAN ONLY ASSUME DURHAM DID NOT SURVIVE THE MASSACRE
THIS IS WHERE THE TRAITORS' ULTIMATUM BECOMES CHILLINGLY CLEAR.
Tucker, Jeffrey
Indentured Labor
Wainwright, Robert
Indentured Labor
ON TOP OF THE REMAINING LAROSAN TANKS IS ROBERT WAINWRIGHT, A DEMOLITIONS EXPERT SERVING LIFE FOR THE TERRORIST BOMBINGS ON MANNAWORKS I
FROM THE CONFIGURATION WE ESTIMATE THAT HE'S WIRED UP ENOUGH EXPLOSIVE CHARGES TO VAPORIZE THE ENTIRE COLONY
THEN, WHAT YOU'RE SAYIN' IS THAT THEY'RE HOLDING THE LAROSAN FOR RANSOM.
THAT DOESN'T GIVE US MUCH OF A NEGOTIATING ADVANTAGE, DOES IT?
THE REBELS STILL WANT TO GET BACK TO EARTH, Maj CARTER-- AND ONLY ECOTECH CAN PROVIDE THEM THAT
RIGHT BUT FIRST, Dr. MAYFIELD AND I MUST ASCERTAIN THE DEGREE OF CONTAM NATION AMONG THE HOSTAGES BEFORE WE CAN DECIDE THE VIABILITY OF SUCH AN EVACUATION.
YES, OUR FIRST CONCERN MUST BE THE HOSTAGES' WELL--
OH, TANK IT, DOCS! ALL ECOTECH CARES ABOUT IS THE LAROSAN.
YOU KNOW THOSE SLAGGERS CAN'T EVER GET OFF THAT ROCK-- AND WITHOUT THAT BARGAINING CHIP, THE HOSTAGES ARE ALREADY AS GOOD AS DEAD!
Huh? YOU MEAN. . THERE WAS NEVER . . A CHANCE--?
THERE IS STILL A CHANCE, Mr VAN CAMPEN. A CHANCE FOR OUR WORLD'S SALVATION.
THINK OF YOUR FAMILIES, DEAR FRIENDS FOCUS ON ALL WHO WILL LIVE, NOT THOSE FEW WHO WILL DIE.
YOUR COMRADES ON MANNAWORKS III ARE RELYING ON YOU TO MAKE THEIR DEATHS MEAN SOMETHING. WILL YOU BRING GLORY TO THEIR MARTYRDOM?
YES!
WE WILL!
BURN THOSE SLAGS!
RAH-RAH.

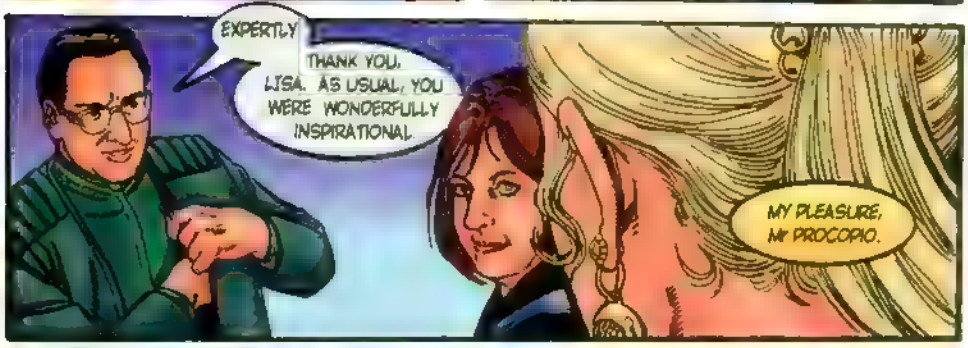
ALRIGHT, TROOPS! YOU KNOW THE DRILL!
C'MON! WE'VE GOT A WORLD TO SAVE!

SUIT UP!
IN FIFTEEN MINUTES I WANT EVERY GRUNT BUNDLED AND STRAPPED INSIDE THE BAYOU!

THAT'S BAI HU, CARTER, BAI-HU!
YOU RIDE MY SHIP, YOU SAY IT RIGHT!
NOW LET'S MOVE IT! I AIN'T HOLDIN' FOR STRAGGLERS!

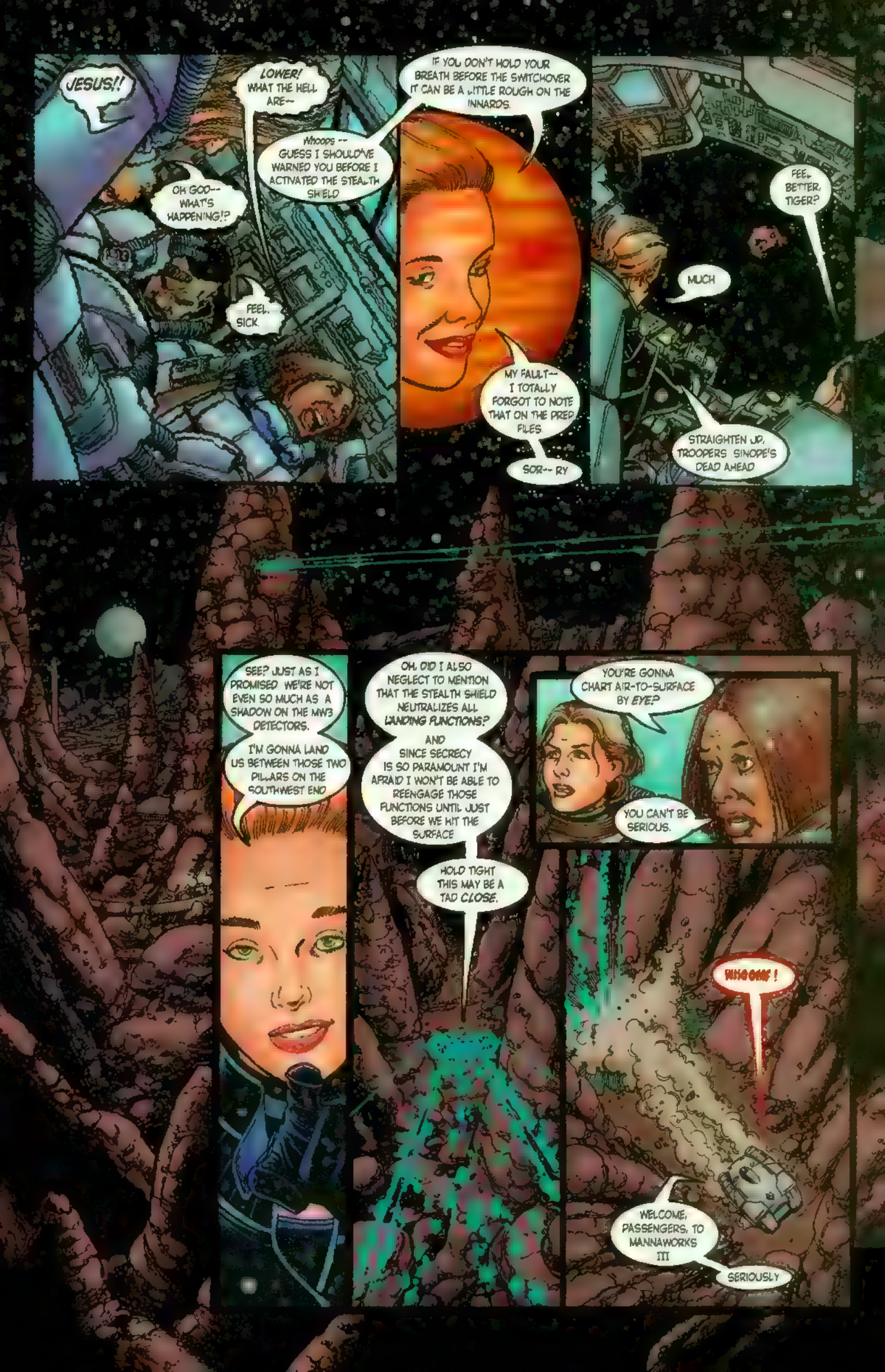

MAN, I'LL BE GLAD WHEN TH S IS OVER AND WE CAN DUMP THAT BITCH!
YA REALLY THINK THAT SHIP OF HERS IS AS SPECIAL AS THEY SAY, MAJOR?
WELL, HAIRE, WE'RE SURE ABOUT TO FIND OUT


CONGRATULATIONS, RUBEN, I'D SAY THAT BRIEFING WENT QUITE WELL.
AS WE KNEW IT WOULD, DR. MAYFIELD.
FROM RESCUERS TO ASSASSINS WITH BARELY AN EYE BLINKED.
HOW DOES LISA DO IT?


EXPERTLY
THANK YOU, LISA. AS USUAL, YOU WERE WONDERFULLY INSPIRATIONAL
MY PLEASURE, Mr PROCOPIO.

IT IS, AFTER ALL, WHAT I WAS CREATED TO DO
QUIT
POWERING DOWN
OFF

BA! HU'S AWAY BAY FIVE DOORS CLOSING
MILLMAN
ROGER THAT, LORI
SAGITTARIUS TO BA! HU. PREPARE TO CUT ALL COM-LINKS TO AVOID FREQUENCY SCANS FROM THE MOONBASE
I JUST HOPE THAT STEALTH FEATURE OF YOURS REALLY WORKS
WELL, CAP'N, IF IT DOESN'T, WE'VE PRETTY MUCH SLAGGED ALL HOPE OF GETTING PAID.
WE'LL RELINK ONCE MW-3 IS SECURED.
BA! HU OUT
OKAY, TROOPS, EVERYONE SHARP FOR THIS?
AFFIRMATIVE, MAJOR ALTHOUGH I'M SURE WE'D ALL FEEL A WHOLE LOT BETTER IF YOU WERE LEADING THE CHARGE
WELL, GEORGE, THAT AIN'T HOW ECOTECH WANTS IT.
JUST WATCH YOUR BACKS WHEN YOU'RE WITH LOWER
I DON'T WANT NO ONE MAKING THE SAME FATAL MISTAKE SAVORETTI AND KOZICKI MADE
SHAAAN-NON ?
GOING GHOST--
--NOW.


JESUS!!
LOWER! WHAT THE HELL ARE--
OH GOD-- WHAT'S HAPPENING!?
FEEL. SICK.
Whoops -- GUESS I SHOULD'VE WARNED YOU BEFORE I ACTIVATED THE STEALTH SHIELD
IF YOU DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH BEFORE THE SWITCHOVER IT CAN BE A LITTLE ROUGH ON THE INNARDS.
MY FAULT-- I TOTALLY FORGOT TO NOTE THAT ON THE PREP FILES.
SOR-- RY
FEEL BETTER, TIGER?
MUCH
STRAIGHTEN UP, TROOPERS SINOPE'S DEAD AHEAD
SEE? JUST AS I PROMISED WE'RE NOT EVEN SO MUCH AS A SHADOW ON THE MW3 DETECTORS.
I'M GONNA LAND US BETWEEN THOSE TWO PILLARS ON THE SOUTHWEST END
OH, DID I ALSO NEGLECT TO MENTION THAT THE STEALTH SHIELD NEUTRALIZES ALL LANDING FUNCTIONS?
AND SINCE SECRECY IS SO PARAMOUNT I'M AFRAID I WON'T BE ABLE TO REENGAGE THOSE FUNCTIONS UNTIL JUST BEFORE WE HIT THE SURFACE
HOLD TIGHT THIS MAY BE A TAD CLOSE.
YOU'RE GONNA CHART AIR-TO-SURFACE BY EYE?
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS.
KRASH !
WELCOME, PASSENGERS, TO MANNAWORKS III
SERIOUSLY

LOWER. NO MATTER WHAT ELSE THEY SAY ABOUT YOU, THERE'S NO DENYING YOU'RE ONE HELL OF A PILOT.
THANKS SO MUCH, CARTER-- AND I GOTTA ADMIT-- YOU'RE ONE HELL OF A TIGHT-ASS.
NOW CUT THE SMALL TALK AND FALL IN LINE WITH THE REST OF THE TROOPERS.
FIRST, WE HAVE TO SECURE THE TANKS EVERYBODY IN PLAN A POSITION!
NOT A WORD, ANDRE YOU WANT THEIR APPROVAL, FINE--
-- JUST DON'T EXPECT ME TO BEND OVER FOR THEM--NOT THIS LATE IN THE GAME
YEAH, BUT--
FORGET IT
madre de dios--
RODRIGUEZ TO LOWER. NO GUARDS HERE JUST BODIES.

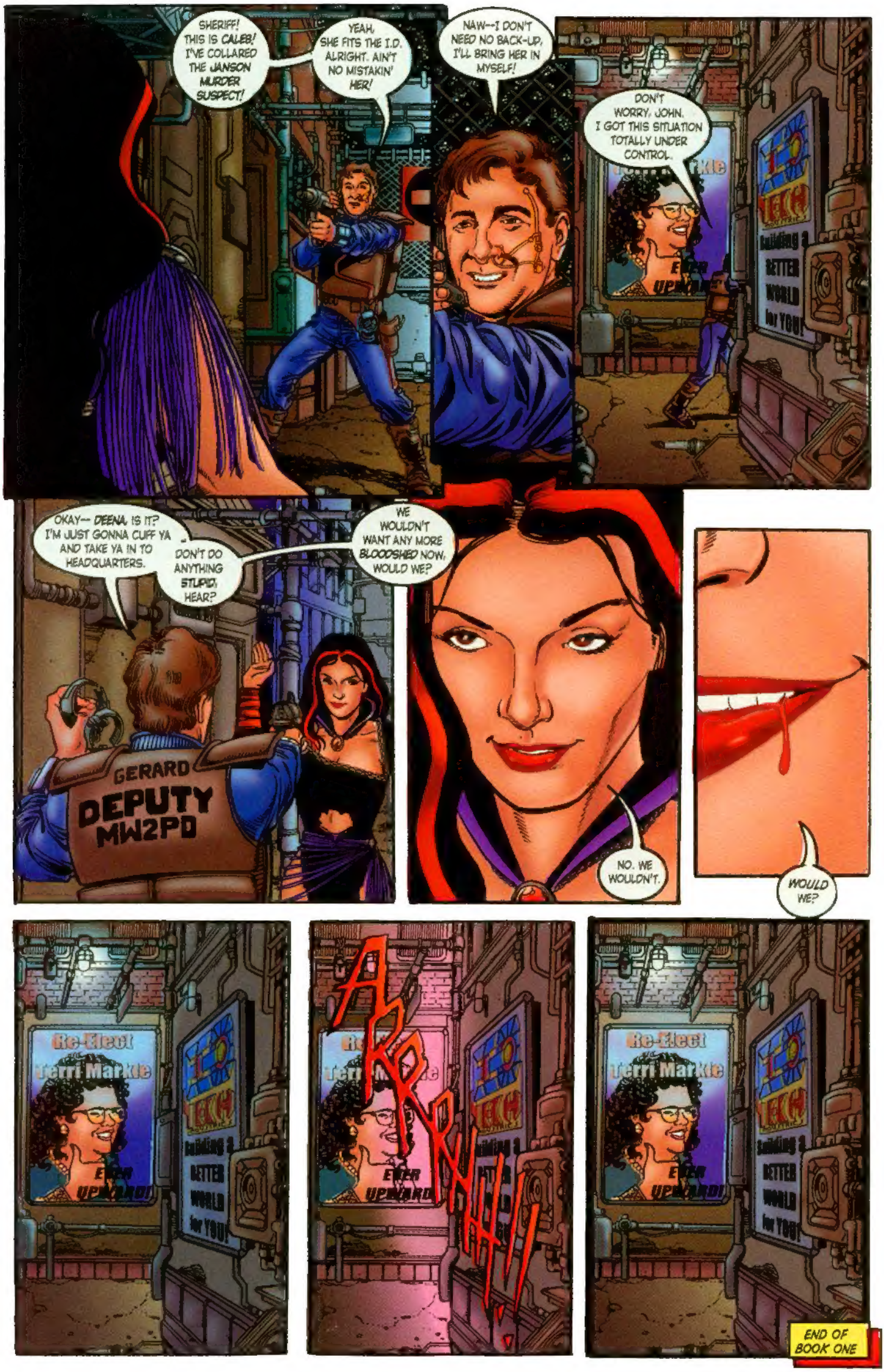
WE'RD YOU'D THINK THEY'D HAVE FIGURED WE'D GO FOR THE TANKS F RST
MAYBE THEY DID BLAIS-- WHAT'S YOUR E T ON BOMB DEACTIVATION?
AT LEAST 3 HOURS, COMMANDER THERE ARE A LOT OF TR GGERS HERE AND EACH ONE'S WIRED TO A SENSOR REMOTE
--AND NO DOUBT WAINWRIGHT'S ON THE OTHER END OF THAT REMOTE
CART R
WELL. THAT SETTLES THAT CARTER--
-- PLAN B
YOWSA!
TIGER WE'VE FOUND MORE NFECTED BOD ES AT THE PROCESSING LAB ENTRANCE
BUT. JUDG NG FROM THE C.OTHES AND FIREARMS THESE WERE PRISONER CORPSES
PRISONERS? BUT-- THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO BE IMMUNE --
OH MY GOD
Cmdr LOWER THE COUNTERLOCK PROGRAM ISN'T RESPONDING
DAMMIT! SCREW THE LOCKS!!
ARE YOU CRAZY!? THEY'LL HEAR--!!

NO, WALTERMIRE--
I DON'T THINK THEY'LL BE HEARING ANYTHING FOR A VERY LONG TIME
TIGER I'M PICKING UP SOME WEIRD SIGNAL ACTIVITY DOWN IN DECON LEVEL WE'RE HOMING IN
BIO-READINGS?
NOPE WHATEVER IT IS, IT AIN'T NOTHING ALIVE
LEASTWAYS IT'S NO LIFE READING I'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE
LOOK AT THIS WHY WOULD SO MANY OF THEM HAVE CONGREGATED HERE?
TIGER WE'VE REACHED THE LOWER QUARANTINE VAULTS WHATEVER'S SENDING THE SIGNAL IT'S INSIDE ONE OF THEM
WE'RE GOING IN
BE CAREFUL ANDRE YOU MAY NOT BE MUCH BUT YOU'RE THE ONLY FRIEND I GOT
I LOVE YOU TOO TIGER
PRADEL-- I SEE SOMETHING IN THERE--
SOMETHING BIG

JUDAS PRIEST!
WHAT IN THE NAME OF GOD ALMIGHTY IS THAT!?
RODRIGUEZ! GET OVER HERE! QUICK!
ANDERSON? WHERE ARE YOU?
OVER BY SUMP POOL "D"! YA GOTTA SEE THIS! HURRY!
WHAT IS IT? YOU SOUND LIKE YOU SAW A GHOST!
CLOSE, CONNIE-- REAL CLOSE
OKAY, JIBA. WHAT'S THE GODDAM MYSTERY?
DOWN THERE.
¡CARAJO!

WHERE THE HELL DID SHE COME FROM!?

WE GOTTA GET THE MEDS DOWN HERE. THESE BIO-READINGS CAN'T BE RIGHT!
ANDERSON
WHOA THERE, JIBA! DID YOU SAY YOU'RE GETTING BIO-READINGS ON HER?
YOU DON'T MEAN TO TELL ME SHE'S--?
THAT'S ONE BIG AFFIRMATIVE, CONNIE.
UNLESS MY SCANNER'S GONE TOTALLY VIRO...
...THIS SNUGGLY IS ALIVE!
ANDERSON TO CMDR. LOWER. DO YOU COPY? RODRIGUEZ AND I HAVE LOCATED A SURVIVOR!
THIS IS LOWER. DID I JUST HEAR YOU RIGHT?
YOU HEARD ME, SWEET-BUTT!
I SAID "DON'T MOVE"!


SHERIFF! THIS IS CALEB! I'VE COLLARED THE JANSON MURDER SUSPECT!
YEAH, SHE FITS THE I.D. ALRIGHT. AIN'T NO MISTAKIN' HER!
NAW--I DON'T NEED NO BACK-UP, I'LL BRING HER IN MYSELF!
DON'T WORRY, JOHN. I GOT THIS SITUATION TOTALLY UNDER CONTROL.
Re-Elect Terri Markle
building a BETTER WORLD for YOU!
OKAY-- DEENA, IS IT? I'M JUST GONNA CUFF YA AND TAKE YA IN TO HEADQUARTERS.
DON'T DO ANYTHING STUPID, HEAR?
WE WOULDN'T WANT ANY MORE BLOODSHED NOW, WOULD WE?
GERARD
DEPUTY
MW2PD
NO. WE WOULDN'T.
WOULD WE?
AAARRRHH!!
END OF BOOK ONE

CRIMSON
PLAGUE
by PÉREZ with SMITH
WATCH FOR
ISSUE #2
SEPTEMBER '97
-QUARTERLY SERIES-
EVENT
COMICS